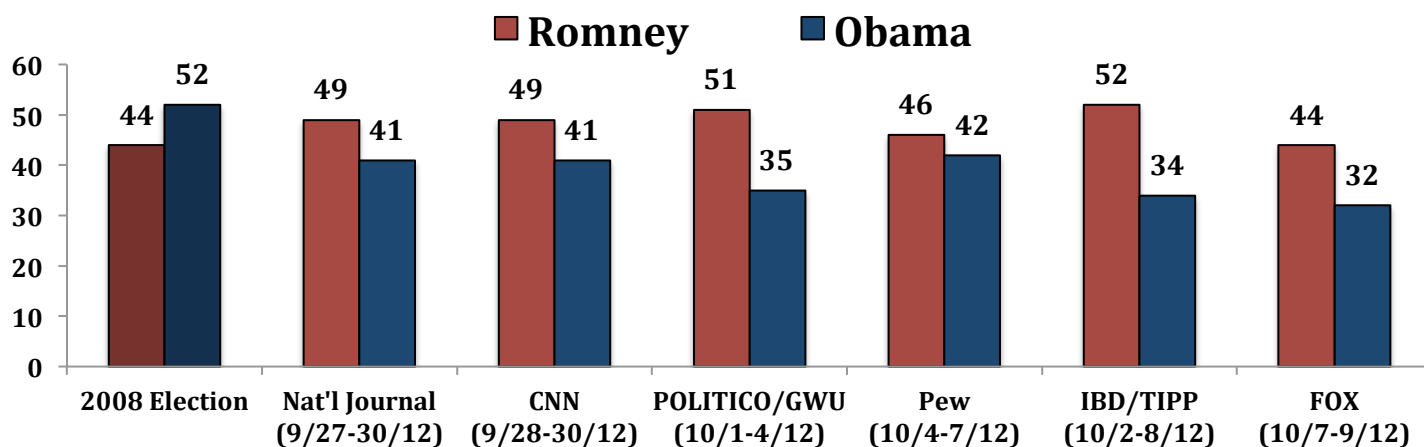
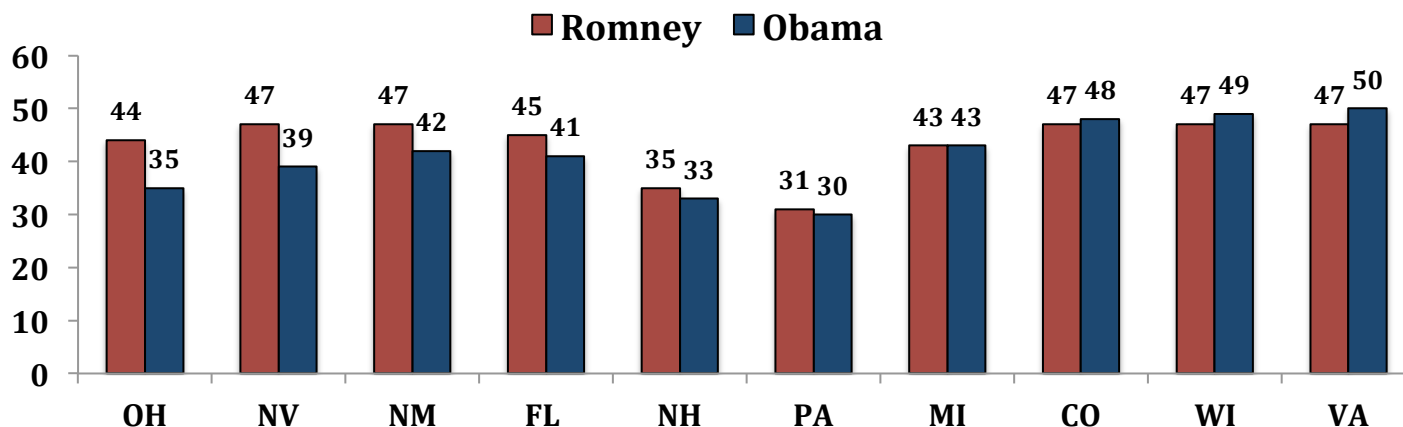


Romney Leading Big with Independents: Independent voters propelled Barack Obama to victory in 2008, with 52% supporting him and only 44% voting for John McCain. Judging by the imposing lead Mitt Romney has established with independents, however, Mr. Obama will not be able to repeat his 2008 feat. As The Hill's "GOP 2012" blog [notes](#), Mr. Romney has run well among independents in national [polls](#) over the course of the campaign and has recently increased his lead among them, beating Mr. Obama with independents by an average of eleven points in six recent national surveys.



Obama v. Romney with Independent Voters Nationwide

Mr. Romney is doing well with independent voters in battleground states as well. According to state polls that break out independent voter preferences, he is ahead of Mr. Obama with independents in Ohio (+9), Nevada (+8), New Mexico (+5), Florida (+4), New Hampshire (+2), and Pennsylvania (+1), and running even or within the margin of error in Michigan (tied), Colorado (-1), Wisconsin (-2), and Virginia (-3). If Mr. Romney holds this support over the remaining weeks and continues effectively making his case as he did in last week's debate, he will be in good position to win key battlegrounds and with them, the election.



Obama v. Romney with Independent Voters in Select States: OH: SurveyUSA 10/5-8; NV: Las Vegas Review-Journal, 10/3-8; NM: WeAskAmerica, 9/25-27; FL: Times-Union Insider Advantage/Majority Opinion Research, 9/24; NH: WMUR Granite State, 9/30-10/6; PA: Siena, 10/1-5; MI: WeAskAmerica, 9/25-27; CO: ARG, 10/5-8; WI: PPP, 10/4-6; VA: PPP, 10/4-7